MOKO

A Serious Review

No 12

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DEMONSTRATION!

The forces of the National Joint Action Committee will come together on Saturday April 12. The Committee is the latest organisation in our society to set out on a road which we have all trod before. Demonstrations are nothing new in our history, nor for that matter in the history of the world, particularly in its recent history. The march of the West Indian people forward to dignity and to what independence they have has been marked by demonstrations of all kinds. Yet, particularly in the age of independence, demonstrations have had little effect in eliciting regard or response from the established authorities. In fact, if we are to judge by the Rodney incident in Jamaica and the use of riot policemen against demonstrators here in Trinidad, demonstrations have merely provided opportunities for the existing system to flex its muscles. Demonstrations have come and gone the system goes on forever.

In Labour, rising un-employment and the Industrial Stabilisation Act have combined to create a major crisis. Nothing more unsuitable ethically, socially and legally can be imagined than this planting of foreign law. Flung upon a so-called independent people like a pair of hand-cuffs that does not fit, the ISA has not merely insulted the working classes but has left them prey to the exploitations of the employers. Mass demonstrations have been held, resolutions have been passed and submitted. So what! The ISA remains and with it the shameful exploitation to which it has given strength.

PAST DEMONSTRATIONS

In the public utilities, there have been other crises. Inadequate water facilities, deficiencies in the transport services, unreliable postal services, etc, etc. Demonstrations have been held, resolutions have been passed and submitted. So what! The system goes on and on.

In Health, more crises. No pills in the hospitals, no doctors in Casualty, patients waiting hours upon hours to be admitted to over-crowded wards. Insanitary health centres, the high cost of drugs, stinking refuse dumps, rubbish trucks dropping their cargoes all over the roads. Demonstrations held, human blockades, wails and screams. So what!

MOMENTS OF SUCCESS

And yet demonstrations have not been entirely without effect. The marches of 1956-61 got us full internal self-government and as much title to Chaguaramas as we can be said to have. The marches of 1961 by the Civil Service and the trade unions won the elections of that year for the P.N.M. The marches of telephone workers corralled and organized to march on full pay in front of the Red House sped the ISA on its way in March of 1965 In 1966 the forced marches of the faithful, marching like Mahal from Diego Martin to Port of Spain, marching for work and money, helped the ruling party. to yet another electoral triumph. In March of this year a two-man demonstration against Mr. Jessel, an errant Englishman, was said to be outstandingly successful.

So we have had successful demonstrations. The Young Power movement invaded Shanty Town and began to organize the discontents of the Shanty Towners. Soon after Shnaty Town got public baths; a school project and other public facilities are said to be contemplated. The squatters in Pasea village had a different experience. They were threatened with expulsion and demolition. Nevertheless in a way the demonstrations were successful: some people, not the "squatters" - as the No Confidence Motion of August revealed - got lands.

Basically though in things essential demonstrations have failed. Rodney, Michener, Anguilla. All the protests of all the abused and outraged in spirit have accomplished precious little. Secret plots continue to be hatched at Heads of Governments Conferences and at CARIFTA expositions for further exploitation of the Caribbean peoples. Public opinion remains relatively unimportant; distrust and contempt for the common people flourish.

TOWARDS NATIONHOOD

So, by and large, our land of political privilege and corruption seems too narrow for our wants. Its soils answers little to our growing and we feel that we can see clearly a better country that we might inhabit. But there are mountains of newly-established laws to overcome; a wilderness of prejudice to be subdued, a powerful force of selfishness and self-interest to be overthrown. We cannot push Nationhood forward with all our might until we remove the stumbling blocks from the road. We must meet them and meet them now.

The Great Alliance

The Great Alliance is the emergence of a strong vibrant body of honest, convicted and serious young men known in Trinidad and Tobago as the National Joint Action Committee. This Committee is dedicated to a revolutionary process of change that is going to affect the lives of Millions of Black People not only in Trinidad and Tobago but throughout the Caribbean. It will usher in a new era and at the same time it will sound the death knell to vicious and discriminatory practices and systems that have enslaved and bedeviled a poor and unsuspecting Majority of Black people for well over Four Hundred years.

The Wind of Change is blowing with more and more intensity, it has reached hurricane force; as it sweeps every corner of the third world men and their ideas are caught up in the malestrom, it is, as if it were, "Arche" the essence of infinite chaos of which Trinidad and Tobago is not exempted organisations such as University Students, Trade Unions, Black Power Movements, Social-Political Groups, Youth Organisations and Sporting and Cultural Organisations have been hurtled together forming the embryonic catalyst which is N.J A.C. and out of which will come a new dawn, a new day, a great change which will have relevance and practical meaning to the lives of a people who have been raped in their innocence.

Young people, for the first time in the history of this country are engaging themselves in a struggle not only for themselves but for their parents, in a manner which is almost phenomenal. For the first time there is real and honest opposition to a biased system and society which meant for the White

Cont'd on Page Two.

THE SUGAR INDUSTRY

PETER PAY FOR PAUL

For most of us January to June is the dry season. If at all we recognize it as the season in which the country's cane crop is harvested we think of the additional road hazards, of the trailers and the bullock carts, of railway engines and mud on the roads. For some of us close enough to the canefields it is also the season of burnt canes, of fire and ash.

Ask the man in street the about burnt canes and he will tell you about snakes. Everybody believes that canes are burnt to kill snakes or to chase them away from the cane piece. But there is a lot more to burnt canes than snakes. In fact, year after year, burnt canes provide a serious bone of contention between the country's several thousand cane farmers and the estates that grind their canes

Take a look at the next sugar cart that you see. The cane on it is very likely to be brown in colour. It is burnt. Everybody burns cane these days, even the estates. You will have to walk many. many miles to find a cartload of fresh, green cane. The reason is simple. Burnt cane is much easier to reap than fresh cane. You can see what you are doing; you can cut the cane higher up the stalk and lower down to the ground. And you can do it twice as fast. And if the cane is taken to the factories within a few days it loses nothing in quality.

Yet for every ton of burnt cane sent by the farmer to the factory the sum of sixty cents is deducted. This has been going on for years over the persistent protests of the cane farmers. At the moment feeling among cane farmers is that this deduction amounts to an arbitrary penalty imposed by the estates on the farmer. In fact the deduction does constitute a substantial loss to the farmer.

Because of quota restrictions imposed by the estates current output per acre on farmers' holdings vary between 15 and 20 tons. This means a loss on burnt canes of between nine to twelve dollars per acre. On a five acre plot this is a loss of between $45 to $60 dollars; on ten acres between $90 and $120. For a farmer whose total earnings from cane often his only source of income may often be as low as $700 –$800 this is a substantial loss.

The plight of the farmers seems so far to have attracted little official sympathy. A Commission of Enquiry established sometime ago to look into the matter of the existing cane price formula, and presumably to report and make recommendations on all matters pertaining to the pricing of canes last met in July 1967. Since then new members have been added to the Commission to replace others who have since resigned but nothing more has happened. Meanwhile the cane farmers continue to suffer as they have done for years and the estates –need we say it? – continue to grow fat from their deductions.

Been to the Licensing Office at Wrightson Road lately? It's just like a hog pen, which is to say that it is just like it has been for years at this time of year. No wonder so many thousands of motorists choose the easy way out and refuse to undergo the brutalising experience of paying their motor car and drivers licences. The major hazard is of course that too many people are trying to do the same thing at the same time. Why can we notpay licences by the quarter - of half-year, or for a whole year running, or even, if we can afford it, for up to three years at a time? Why can we not pay licences at the wardens offices? Why this centralised mess year after year? Why? And to add to the confusion this year the Licensing Office is being renovated when business is at its peak, which makes the Licensing Office the sweatiest, hottest most disorganised hog pen in the country.

While well meaning city folk all advise that agriculture being labour intensive is the field to which the nation should turn in an effort to solve the unemployment problem, I wonder how many of them are aware of the frustrations which face the small man with a 10 acre plot who tries in someonce prosperous agricultural district to eke out an existence.

On one of our tours to the country districts we paused for a while at Tabaquite, a once thriving rail town. After a few visits and a little chat with some of the inhabitants we became aware of an almost hopeless situation involving those endeavouring to follow the essential calling of the land.

They clear lands and plant, they mulch and prune, no problem, but beyond this point worry begins. Who would reap the fruits of their labour, they themselves or the thieves? If they reap, what price will they get? Will the Gov't buy it or will they be glutted and suspend purchasing?

If a private buyer, will they go to market to find him or stay at home and wait? What they ever do the return for effort is hardly worth it. The few pigs reared by these farmers provide as much worry to sell. The cold storage at Chaguaramas filled with unsold carcases sets a wet blanket on prices. Not to sell irrespective of price means incurring added feed cost which they can't afford.

One such farmer when asked what would he suggest should be done replied sternly "Mr. Gentleman friend! What you asking me? " The Government planning and planning, all I could do, is work hard, do my best, and leave the rest."

In his way he has learned to call that George!

C.T.G!!!

Thanks To our Artists

Steelband concert, claypso concert, poetry reading. Woodford Square was feeling the weight of thousands upon its soil. Thousands came, thousands listened, thousands contributed to the special Fund. Artistes came and gave of their best. It was a further development of the Great Alliance. The artistes were relating their artistic expressions to the developing social awareness. Such were the cultural performances organised by the NJAC in aid of the Black Students in Montreal, Canada.

What one saw at these cultural performances demonstrated many things. Firstly, you saw trade unionists, workers, university students, youth, unemployed persons and artistes. There, you said, is the beginning of a great alliance. If such an alliance can only grow and really become effective. That is point number one.

Point number two. The artistes played well. They were at their best. And you said, wonder how much they charged. Someone says they are performing free. That is their contribution to the students Fund.

Yes; the NJAC cultural performances showed something new. The artistes were beginning to relate to the problems, the public, the passions of the society. They were not only against: they were also for. The effort and creativity visible at these performances, all given willingly and in aid of the Black students in Canada, remind us of Carnival. Not the fete and the rum. But the energy and effort expended, the creativity inherent in the quality of the art form; the only reward being satisfaction that one has helped, that one has participated.

Art and social movements become fused together when the entire basis of a certain kind of social life is falling apart. The slaves used to plan their revolts at religions and cultural gatherings. The Santo Domingo Revolution began with such a combination of politics and art. We are seeing before our eyes the beginning of such a fusion. This combination, this type of cooperation must be developed and expanded, for as it develops and expand so too shall we as a people be moving from the old into the new.

Discrimination at home

BY EARL LEWIS

If we were to forget Sir George Williams for a while and concentrate on the mote in our own eye we would have to admit that much colour and race discrimination still exists in this society.

In the field of employment the clearest demonstration of this fact is the automatic assumption we still make that the boss is white and the 'boy' is black. This assumption is reinforced by the awareness that even when the boss is black his terms and conditions of work are very likely to be inferior to those of a white person employed in the same job.

In politics the lines are hard and fast. If you are Negro or look like one you are thought to be P.N.M., Indian or near it and you are D.L.P. It does not matter where your sympathy actually lies. Until you become identified with a contrary sentiment you are placed according to race.

If these general divisions were all we would be lucky. But the general groupings sub-divide and fight small wars. Hindus oppose Moslems, and this too has its political expression; foreign white scorn local white all

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The Great Alliance

From Page One

People (a mere 4 per cent of the population)a sensuous and luxurious living on one hand, and a bare impoverished existence for the black peoples, Indians, Africans etc. (96 per cent of the population), but this situation is about to be revoked. The Black White situation will be put in its correct perspective, Independence will be seriously questioned as to what it means to the ordinary man in the street and as to its present scope and direction for young people.

Leaders of the community and their pre-occupation will be seriously analysed as to the type of contribution that they have been making to the society, and for their particular Betrayals. The private sector will enjoy equal priority in our searching and critical investigation into the existing malpractices.

All this promises to be the silver lining behind the cloud of darkness, and this sacrificed task, this dedication, this struggle which has relevance to the millions of black peoples will be seriously carried out by this great Brotherhood.

N.J.A.C.

ON FROM ANGUILLA

The British invasion of Anguilla has evoked panic-stricken and guilt-ridden responses from almost all the Caribbean Governments. To understand this we have to consider three things.

The first is the attempt by Caribbean leaders to resolve the problem in 1967, attempts which were abortive because of their preoccupation with returning Anguilla to the fold rather than with effecting a conciliatory settlement.

The second is the initial willingness of several Caribbean Governments 'to assist Bradshaw to put Anguilla in her place.' That was the famous 'Barbados Agreement.' The Jamaican Government backed out in the face of public protest in Jamaica and the entire proposal was torpedoed.

The third is the recently concluded Heads of Governments Conference (held at the Hilton Hotel) at which SECURITY seemed to have been the only issue on which there was consensus. It is now quite clear in spite of unacceptable denials and pious platitudes, that at that Conference Caribbean Governments (with the probable exception of Jamaica) pledged to support Bradshaw and strongly advocated the restoration by any means of 'law and order' in Anguilla. The crucial underlying factor is that the Caribbean Governments, exhausted defeated and bankrupt of ideas, are now ganging up to repress rising and widespread discontent and to hold back the new order. They cannot solve our problems, and they are bluffing us. The sooner we call their bluff the better it will be.

Bradshaw called for British troops; they need not have come: but they came. Consequently, we must condemn British intervention as a perpetuation of a vicious colonialism. Why does Britain not intervene in BIG WHITE Rhodesia where she has a moral and legal right to, and why does she choose to intervene in SMALL, BLACK Anguilla where she has no moral right to intervene? Moreover, it is the overwhelming majority of people in Anguilla who are exercising their absolute right to self-determination, while the Rhodesian action is that of a racist minority. The British Government is blatantly guilty of RACISM. Monkey know what tree toclimb, but the British monkey might be in for a big surprise; Congo man does eat white meat you know.

Most of all, however, we must condemn the repressionist policy of the Bradshaw regime and the reactionary policies of all the regimes of the Commonwealth Caribbean. That a Caribbean leader could request foreign troops against his people is a disgusting manifestation of neo-colonialism. That such an action had the approval of other Caribbean leaders is alarming as it is disgusting. It is a manifestation of the outward orientation of our leaders. They are still looking to foreigners to solve West Indian problems. (The foreign investor, the foreign expert, the foreign goods etc) They have no confidence in their own people. Evidently our Governments do not need us; but the more important question is, DO WE NEED THEM?

The valiant people of Anguilla have made the first genuine declaration of Independence in the Commonwealth Caribbean. All the signs are that the British will not easily concede that independence. We as West Indians must resolve that they shall enjoy the fruits of their courage. They do not have the frivolous formalities if Independence, but what they do have – THE SPIRIT OF INDEPENDENCE - is more important and is a lesson to us.

We must intensify our offensive against political and especially economic Imperialism. We must ensure the abolition of the institution of associated statehood. We must also intensify our offensive against the neo-colonialist regimes of the West Indies who have betrayed the Anguillan struggle for freedom, justice and self-determination. They have betrayed us all. Together with their equally sterile and reactionary opposition colleagues. ALL THE WEST INDIAN GOVERNMENTS MUST GO.

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MOKO AFTER SIX MO

In the six months of its existence and incidents of especial importance to Rodney incident, one of the most impo of it has proceeded the issues of Black P U.W.I., the army and politics, police place and will continue to take place w ascend from his academic abyss into graduate in the university of hunger.

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MOKO JUMBIE

MOKO AFTER SIX MONTHS

In the six months of its existence, MOKO has been reviewing a number of issues and incidents of especial importance to the West Indian community. We began with the Rodney incident, one of the most important watersheds in recent Caribbean history. Out of it has proceeded the issues of Black Power, the role of the academic, the functioning of U.W.I., the army and politics, police brutality and the bitter explosion which takes place and will continue to take place whenever the West Indian is courageous enough to ascend from his academic abyss into the harsh glare of social reality: to attend and graduate in the university of hunger.

The violence which followed the Jamaican government's expulsion of Rodney indicates a growing consciousness among the youth and the disaffected elements of Jamaican society, that whenever a dedicated black is oppressed, they are oppressed. The meaning and relevance of Black Power to the various islands of the West Indies, has been and will continue to be one of our preoccupations.

There is urgent need, too, to analyse violence as a growing aspect of the politics and the daily life of the area; choke-gangs in Guyana, looting, shooting, indiscriminate use of tear-gas and the army in Jamaica. The reactions of the Guyanese and Jamaican governments and public opinion there to crime and violence, have differed only in degree. In both places it is believed that repressive measures will stem the tide. In neither place has there been a serious attempt to examine the roots of underprivilege and unemployment which help to make crime inevitable. In both places, too, the governments have been anxious to find someone to blame: subverts, misguided academics, hooligans, the Opposition, Castroite elements, Ho Chi Minh or Stokely Carmichael.

Besides these trends, MOKO has been able to suggest the similarity in the political development of the newly independent states of the West Indies. Indeed, it is clear to us that established regimes in the Caribbean will try, whenever it isn't too embarassing, to help each other to remain in power. Trinidad for example, whose citizenship laws are at times so hard, allowed Guyanese overseas voting could work nicely.

A number of articles have appeared which analyse things like the National Oil Company, the Budget, Sugar and Society, the Third Draft Five Year Plan, BWIA, which indicate that not much thought has been given to radical alteration of the economic structure.

We have been aware that comment on all aspects of our artistic activity is vital, and have in a small way been trying to establish a West Indian aesthetic. Altogether, our experience in MOKO has made us realize the need for self-recognition, which alone can give us the courage to tackle in a direct way the various problems which beset us. Our role, therefore, remains clear: to continue the task of scrutiny and definition, and to make our perceptions accessible to an increasing number of people, by striving for that clarity of language which will help us to be forceful, and relevant in our commitment.

EXIT DUD AND PHIL

"Nothing in their lives
Became them like the leaving it. They died" (Macbeth).

The University of the West Indies has a new vice-chancellor in the person of Professor Roy Marshall whom Trinidadians and Tobagonians may remember best as a member of the Mbanefo Commission on subversive activities. Sir Philip Sherlock has left. and Dr. Dudley Huggins, pro-vice-chancellor. St. Augustine has also left. They have gone quietly and this is to their credit. The University of the West Indies has come to the end of an era, or so we should hope.

Recently much public speculation has centered on the foreign relations of the University, on its relations with the governments of the region and on its chances of survival in a somewhat hostile political environment. Undoubtedly this is a central issue and not only because the Jamaican government, host to a good part of the University's assets, has brought the question into the open. Many are the members of the University staff who would themselves advocate such a break, albeit for selfish reasons. The Trinidad and Tobago government, too, while issuing no public statements has obviously been making its own calculations. As usual the University keeps its thoughts to itself preferring to be desperately self-righteous when events overtake its silence.

There is however a larger University concern which should be attracting public comment and speculation at this very moment. It is this: what kind of University do we want? First of all though the public must realize that the University so far has hardly functioned as an academic community. It has functioned as an aggregate of individuals, many of them intensely self-seeking, variously operating the system as best they can. In fact, this has been the major hallmark of the Sherlock-Huggins era. Neither before nor after Arthur Lewis have there been any University officials who have shared any worthwhile conception of what the university should be. Lewis himself who at one time seems to have had such a conception ruined his prospects of support by making one of the worst appointments to a senior post that the University has ever witnessed.

In recent years priorities within the University have tended to be based not on calculations of serious regional needs but on the influence and partisanship of particular interest groups and personalities. At St. Augustine the system flourished unchecked in the Huggins era. Overall the same philosophy prevailed. The men of influence and decision are everywhere well known. Less well known are the criteria on which they decide except that these too often appear to consistently reflect their own personal interests. In sum, operational criteria are often loose, ill-defined, beneficial to some, unjustly detrimental to others. So it is that at one and the same time it is possible to hear of professors and senior lecturers made to grace and favour and of others who are passed over or dismissed for not being submissive enough.

The greatest need at the moment is a coherent philosophy of development for the University. This means all sorts of new conceptions of the roles of academics and of the work they do are called for. New criteria of excellence are needed. A positive sense of morality in the administration of University affairs is imperative; at the very least the University's administration must conduct itself as to remove that suspicion of immorality that now surrounds its every move. One suspects that the current student unrest is in large part a reaction against this University immorality bolstered by the conviction that whatever else a University might be it is not a place for self-seekers. "Something wrong", and it's time to put it right. recent vacancies at the top provide some chance for change. Whether the chance will be taken remains to be seen.

CHAOS

In all the hubbub about Anguilla internal affairs prevailing in St. Kitts seem to have attracted very little comment. Yet recent developments are important inthat they reveal the mounting unpopularity if the Bradshaw government. This unpopularity has triggered off a nervous and panicky reaction by a regime well-known in the West Indies for its high-handed and authoritarian tactics. The recent upheavals in the Teaching Service in that territory is a case in point.

In January of this year the Headmaster of the No 1 Government Secondary School Mr. Victor Jones found himself threatened with dismissal. He was "granted" an extended period of leave and his case was referred for trial to the Public Service Commission. Charges against him included insubordination, refusal to carry out instructions and conduct prejudicial to the Public Service. Protest by students of the Basseterre High School, in the form of posters and placards, was read by the Ministry of Education as a "breakdown of discipline", and as a response by students and staff alike to a call from the Opposition People's Action Movemen
barass the Government.

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I HEAR THE CANES BURNING

I hear the canes burning
I hear the flames cackle, crackle,
chirp, whizz and whisper
Fantastic tales
Fantastic tales, agonied and
Scorching
Revealing many dark centuries
When the cold earth lay
dumb
At the feet of polished boots
prostrate
Awaiting redress, redemption in
A red fire of flaming horizons
I hear the canes burning
I see the fragments fly in
distant dark
I watch the distance bescathed
with cinder-spark
I get excited as the busy winds
frame a tale of ashes floating,
canes burning, memory churning,
Down the vale of tears
Through the dumb years
Percolated through toil and
Task and torment the ashes fly.
As they flew when flames were
Neither so high nor so extensive
Nor neither so hot the fire had spread
I see the fragments fly in
distant dark
When merchants barques
anchored off the beachy head.
The fire has spread. The flames rise
higher, higher, nobler, deeper
Deeper?
Do the flames burn deeper enough?
The sky is painted with those
flying ash
The dancing distance carry the
stamp of thrash
The mind is diving in a pool
of flames.
Some one reminds
Its time for the southern games!
Youth stampede
A carnival is on
If at all flames dance
With the East winds they
are gone. I hear those flames
cackle and crackle
Swerve and whisper
A burning spreading tale
Down, down the vale of
Memory. A super annuated
hisotyr, A billion dollar mystery.
Millions stand naked in the dark.
Ready to be chopped for juice,
Black-faced, humiliated stark
Yelling against a pale-livered truce
Someone gasps!
A dark, distant sky above
Someone gasps!
A darker stranger earth beneath
They see the canes churning
I hear the canes burning.

By LOOKNATH DUBE

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CHAOS IN ST. KITTS

In all the hubbub about Anguilla internal affairs prevailing in St. Kitts seem to have attracted very little comment. Yet recent developments are important inthat they reveal the mounting unpopularity if the Bradshaw government. This unpopularity has triggered off a nervous and panicky reaction by a regime well-known in the West Indies for its high-handed and authoritarian tactics. The recent upheavals in the Teaching Service in that territory is a case in point.

In January of this year the Headmaster of the No 1 Government Secondary School Mr. Victor Jones found himself threatened with dismissal. He was "granted" an extended period of leave and his case was referred for trial to the Public Service Commission. Charges against him included insubordination, refusal to carry out instructions and conduct prejudicial to the Public Service. Protest by students of the Basseterre High School, in the form of posters and placards, was read by the Ministry of Education as a "breakdown of discipline", and as a response by students and staff alike to a call from the Opposition People's Action Movement to embarass the Government.

This display of posters and placards by the students of the school, after normal school hours, was met by the Ministry with the removal of the Headmaster from the school. The Headmaster was put on leave, arrangements were made for the "strictest supervision" of the school, and in a series of the school, and in a series of radio braodcasts over the Government owned and controlled Radio Station, the Minister railed against "politicking" at the school. This was followed by the establishment of a Commission of Investigation, its terms of reference being to enquire into "the apparant breakdown of discipline" at the school and the circumstances relating to the display of posters etc.

THE MINISTRY & PROTEST

The implied accusation of Staff of having condoned, if not actively promoted, this protest which has been interpreted by the Ministry as a breakdown in discipline and the stationing of an expatriate Ag. Chief Inspector of Schools at the Basseterre High School were very much resented by Staff and they refused to teach under supervision. The attempt by the Ministry to bring in "substitutes" and their unwillingness to work out a reasonable settlement with Staff led to the involvement of the Teacher's Association, and matters soon escalated into the call for and implementation of a General Strike by teachers and the threat of strike by the Civil Service.

The Teachers' strike lasted four days, the Association having instructed its members to return to work following prolonged and generally unsatisfactory negotiations with the Public Service Commission, an independent body set up under the Constitution, with the sole and unfettered right to "hire and fire" Public Servants. The Public Service Commission gave its word to the joint Teachers' Association and Civil Service Association delegation that if Teachers went back to work immediately, there would be no victimisation of those who went on strike; that they would arrange for the removal of the "extraordinary supervision" of the Basseterre High School; and that information to this affair would be published cunningly gave no written assurances BECAUSE the life of that body was due to end in a month's time. Since then, four days strike pay have been deducted from the salaries of all teachers who were on strike, ALTHOUGH the Public Service Commission claims that it made no such recommendation. Also, the "supervision" of the Basseterre High School by the expatriate Ag. Chief Inspector of Schools continued until she felt like leaving. Finally, no mention was made in any official organ of the Government of the withdrawal of such supervision. Public abuse of Teachers by Ministers of Government, and in particular by the Minister of Education and the Deputy Premier continued in Party Political Meetings.

Subsequently, the Headmaster, Mr. Victor Jones, has been dismissed from the Public Service WITHOUT any benefits whatever, after working in the Public Service for THIRTY years, i.e. from the time he became a Pupil Teacher at the age of 16. Mr. Jones has never had Secondary School education, and worked his way up the service under conditions of dire poverty. The protest of the Teachers against this flagrant breach of justice has brought only threats from Ministers of Government.

As a result of the way in which the whole affair was used politically by the Government, all discipline has broken down at the Basseterre High School. Children have been egged on by their parents and particularly by the Government to "show the teachers" how they feel about having lost four days of school.

On the teachers' side, it certainly has not helped the already intense frustration of all ranks in the Public Service to have in authority over them white expatriates behind whom Ministers often hide, and who often express smug satisfaction when Civil Servants are "chastised", or, according to the Acting Chief Inspector Schools, "whipped" by the Government.

I HEAR THE CANES BURNING

I hear the canes burning
I hear the flames cackle, crackle,
chirp, whizz and whisper
Fantastic tales
Fantastic tales, agonied and
Scorching
Revealing many dark centuries
When the cold earth lay
dumb
At the feet of polished boots
prostrate
Awaiting redress, redemption in
A red fire of flaming horizons
I hear the canes burning
I see the fragments fly in
distant dark
I watch the distance bescathed
with cinder-spark
I get excited as the busy winds
frame a tale of ashes floating,
canes burning, memory churning,
Down the vale of tears
Through the dumb years
Percolated through toil and
Task and torment the ashes fly.
As they flew when flames were
Neither so high nor so extensive
Nor neither so hot the fire had spread
I see the fragments fly in
distant dark
When merchants barques
anchored off the beachy head.
The fire has spread. The flames rise
higher, higher, nobler, deeper
Deeper?
Do the flames burn deeper enough?
The sky is painted with those
flying ash
The dancing distance carry the
stamp of thrash
The mind is diving in a pool
of flames.
Some one reminds
Its time for the southern games!
Youth stampede
A carnival is on
If at all flames dance
With the East winds they
are gone. I hear those flames
cackle and crackle
Swerve and whisper
A burning spreading tale
Down, down the vale of
Memory. A super annuated
hisotyr, A billion dollar mystery.
Millions stand naked in the dark.
Ready to be chopped for juice,
Black-faced, humiliated stark
Yelling against a pale-livered truce
Someone gasps!
A dark, distant sky above
Someone gasps!
A darker stranger earth beneath
They see the canes churning
I hear the canes burning.

By LOOKNATH DUBE

A Journey To Remember

By L. D. "LULLY" PUNCH
Ideal Printery, 176 pp.

To a younger generation of Trinidadian, the notion that those who lived out their prime years in the heyday of the colonial era should attempt memoirs is certainly very welcome. Such men; if they were perceptive, could provide vital clues as to the way in which a society has assumed its particular shape and psychology. If Mr.Punch's book contributes in any way, it is almost purely by default. One might say that no one would have devoted himself so happily to a largely trivial narrative unless he was "as pleased as Punch."

Mr Punch has achieved the remarkable feat of talking about life in Trinidad from 1919 to the fifties without discussing the development of Carnival and calypso, the steelband, the impact of Captain Cipriani the Butler riots of 1937, the activities of C.L.R. James, Albert Gomes, Padmore and the American occupation during the War. The last mentioned he sums up in one remarkable phrase! "Trinidad was an American Base and really at the hub of 'traffic' going North and South. The fact is that we had oil and were supplying His Majesty's Navy."

There is constantly the assumption by the writer that what is wonderful for him ought to be so for a reader thus he writes: "Belmont was my home for thirteen years, a dear place to me associated as I was with Church, Sunday School, Scouts and a few literary Clubs." Or "On New Year's Day 1935, we found ourselves lonely." Sadly even in Mr. Punch's account of conflict between Colonial officials and the Civil Service Association, there is absolutely no conception of symbolic meanings.

As a phenotype, if I may borrow an Earl Augustus term, Mr.Punch through his memoirs testifies to the utter vacuum into which Dr.Williams and the PNM rushed in 1956. In this sense I would relate "A Journey to remember" to the novels of Michael Anthony in which the environment is viewed with a kind of simplicity that almost amounts to psychological unconsciousness, a vacuous Nirvana which the average Trinidadian now consciously cultivates through rum and feteing.

CHESS

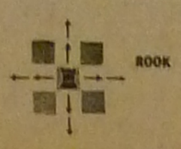
BY "OTTO"

Having looked at the pawns we continue with the movement of the other pieces. The rules are not difficult to master. There is one general rule of which we should note. It is this: pieces can move to squares occupied by hostile pieces; when they do, they "capture". Pi eces cannot however, move to squares occupied by friendly pieces. The presence of a friendly man on a square prevents a piece from landing there.

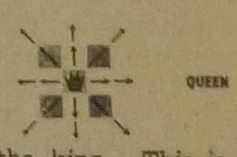
Now for the knights. Knights move very curiously. They are the only pieces allowed to jump over other pieces. Their movement is L-shaped. The typical move is two squares up or across the board and then one square across or up as in the diagram. Two up one across, one up two across.

Bishops may move as far as possible in a forward or backward direction, but only on the diagonal. One bishop moves on the white squares, the other moves on the black squares. Each player has two bishops.

Rooks or castles move in straight lines to any unimpeded distance forwards, backwards or sidewasy. They capture as do the other pieces by moving to a square previously occupied by a hostile man.



The queen combines the moves of all the other pieces, the knight excepted. She can move forwards, backwards, sideways, diagonally. She is the most powerful piece on the board.



Lastly, the king. This is the most important piece in the whole game. In fact the purpose of the game is to place the king in such a position that he can neither move nor remain where he is without being taken. When he is put into such a posiiton the game ends. In fact the king is never taken or "captured". If he stands in a position where he can be captured at the next move he is said to be "in check". If he cannot get out of "check" he is mated.

The king, like the queen, can move in any direction, backwards, forwards, diagonally, sideways. But he can move only one step at a time. So that he is at once the most important piece on the board and the weakest. Even the pawn can outrun the king. When the chips are down the king can do precious little to save himself. Which figures.

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BLACK POWER AND THE WEST INDIES

BY NOEL A WHITE

The definition of Black Power has become one of the urgent necessities for West Indians. The current mood of the area betrays a profound involvement with the idea of blackness and with its meaning in the context of the politics, the economics and the social life of the area. It is not that the West Indians have never before been concerned with blackness; it is that today they are concerned with Black Power which is altogether a different and more positive idea. Also it is an idea which nas given rise to some confusion because the origin of the phrase is to be found in the circumstances of the United States of America which are, as we would all admit, markedly different from our own.

PROBLEM OF DEFINITION

Most persons who watch the actions of the Negro leaders in the United States find it impossible to define what "Black Power" means. Up to the end of 1967 it was a term that frightened whites and conservative blacks. Then, as it became more and more popular nearly all leaders began to use it to define their own programs. At present, practically the only organization that does not use it is the National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples, which has a history of spending much energy criticising what the other organisations are doing instead of concentrating on it own program.

Those who would understand the term, "Black Power" then would be best advised to look at the definition of the person who founded it, - Stokeley Carmichael. He defines it as "the power of blacks to decide what their lives will be." It can easily be seen then that increased, education, more and better jobs, higher pay, more cohesive voting, many different developments would improve the power of Negro Americans to decide what their lives would be. And it can easily be understood. too, that the recognition of the Civil Rights of Negroes is an essential part of the definition. The important difference between civil rights organisations is in the means that they choose to use toward their ends.

MARCUS GARVEY

But the negro is living in a competitive situation, and to make him rise you have not only to increase his opportunities; you have to raise his morals, his self-confidence and his educational standard. This is a point which Marcus Garvey emphasised and which most Americans who lived in the 1920's did not comprehend. The increasing understnading of this factor in the last few of Negroes heroes. Garvey's approach was especially apt because the culture in which most Negroes have been living in the past four centuries have been directed by the forces of enslavement and/or colonisation. The Negro's self-image has been decided by overlords who had a vested interest in making him feel docile and ashamed. But in successful, independent cultures the self-image promoted is the opposite. It makes its people feel aggressive, learned, beautiful, courageous and proud of themselves.

AFRICAN HISTORY

How can the change from negative to positive personality be invoked? An important feature of Garvey's speeches was his emphasis on the great civilisations of thepast which existed in Africa. In this way he removed the myth of jungle, tom-toms, naked savages dancing around fires which was all that Negroes in the western hemisphere knew of their forebears. When they came to understand that mature civilisations had been developed in Africa their sense of their own possibilities was increased.

Within the last few years the interest in African history and culture has increased in the United States. And though one significant cause is the pheonix-like rise of independent states in Africa, there is no doubt of the self-respect that the study of African history has bestowed on the Negroes who studied it. West Indians and white have been brainwashed by Tarzan films and by news and documentaries which have shown little else than pigmies, bushmen or Africans in a state of starvation or distress. They would do well to read and hear more of Africa's gifts. Then the nervous laughter which one hears in cinemas when Africans appear on the screen will disappear with the decline of our self-hate.

THE AMERICAN SCENE

Recently, there has been a great movement in the United States to spread the knowledge of Negro American history. This is having the effect of assuring Negroes that the "black experience is worthy of academic study". More and more colleges and universities are establishing courses in Negro history. At the moment there is a course on television which extends from the empires of Ghana and Songhai to the events of the present day. And the Metropolitan Museum, the premier museum in New York is staging a show of photographs and recordings entitled, "Harlem on My Mind." It contains not only many pictures of Garvey and the U.N.I.A. in action but also has a record of Claude McKay saying his poem, "If WE Must Die." About 100,000 people, white and black have so far attended the exhibition.

What stands out therefore about Black Power in the U.S.A. is that it is primarily concerned with the plight of the Negro in a predominantly white society. In the West Indies Black Power, if it is to be valid, cannot be concerned with the Negro alone. There are, particularly in Trinidad and Guyana, large sections of the native black populations which are not Negro but Indian. For them, too, Black Power is relevant but it must be properly defined. In addition, there is the whole relationship of the societies of the West Indies, black societies, with the white metropolitan societies of the outer world, particularly of the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Canada. The full explanation of the meaning of Black Power in the West Indies calls for a deeper understanding of the relationship between these societies and our aim, and the insight into how these relationships may be changed.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

by JOMO WAHTUSE

Exactly what does Mr. Clive Spencer hope to find out on his one man mission to England, United States and Canada must be foremost on the minds of the Government. For it is a mission impossible, an unnecessary waste of tax money, a futile exercise and above all in the case of England, the subjection of another colonial mouse for the British Government to play games with as they succeed in doing during each Prime Ministers' conference. For instance Mr. Spencer does not have to go to England to find out that the Labour Government, prior to succeeding Conservatives in 1964, cried shame on the Conservatives when they propsoed a race restriction act.

Ironically the Labour Government has not only enforced the act but has done so twice as rapidly as the Conservatives had intended. Nor does Mr. Spencer have to go to the Government controlled Labour Exchange in order to see job vacancy cards among the recruiting officers' files marked N.C.P.– No Coloured persons wanted. Or maybe he might be inclined to find out what it is like on the social side. Mr Spencer could save himself the trip and at Government's expense put through a call to one of the housing agents requesting better parts of Hammersmith areas. Or why not simply ask Mr. Samuel Selvon, who has just returned from England; he will surely give an honest answer.

STAY AT HOME

Mr. Clive Spencer's time could be better spent in this country on a similar exercise as that on which he has left these shores. A great deal of good would be done by an enquiry into what seems to be the wilful neglect of our roads. A survey of the thousands of our unemployed youths whose bellies are filled each day with a lot of wicked propaganda. through song and words about Trinidad being a happy land where. it does not take much to survive should also help.

It would also be interesting for Mr. Spencer to find out why so many of our highly qualified people are simply packing up their jobs to face the cold miseries of other countries. Teachers, professors, airline technicians only to name a few. Here it will be interesting to find out whether the fault lies with the crude priggish behaviour of those in authority who have replaced their former colonial bosses, or with the young people leaving our shores through sheer ambition to get further ahead in countries which offer them greater opportunities.

Finally in this cesspit of hypocrisy which we call happy cosmopolitan Trinidad, the rampant discriminatory practices we deceitfully tolerate need to be thoroughly investigated not only by Mr. Clive Spencer but by Government, for example the Jaycees with their do as I say but not as I do policy, the employment policies of Messrs Kirpalani, the Bank of Nova Scotia as a matter of fact all the banks and major firms through out the island.

The employees or financers of these firms have not only brought their money to this land of ours but also their racism which they enjoy in their own countries, unfortunately this is to the detriment, social and moral, of the black masses of this country.

Discrimination At Home

From Page Two

the way from the air-conditioned office to the cocktail party on the terraced view; brown skinned Negro shuns the black skinned one, and all around there is a great to-do about who is to marry whom.

In sport the same preferential treatment is given time and again to fair complexioned sportsmen by the news media and other sporting organisations. The black sportsman has to make it the hard way. If he becomes a glamour boy it is only by meeting the exceptional standards he is required to meet before recognition is conceded. In the Press recently a cyclist who rode with distinction at the premiere sports meeting in the Caribbean and covered himself with glory in the toughest company was being casually referred to as the nation's No. 2 cyclist. Even the Jaycees Carnival Queen contest-presumably another sporting occasion- carries after a fashion which says "if you black, out!"

In the shops and stores, in the offices of business places and professionals the same dual standards apply. Good or bad treatment is handed out often in direct proportion to skin colour. In the arts the steel bands tell a tale. Trinidad's only original contribution to the world of music nearly did not make it. Its origins were black and underprivileged and it caught hell to surface. Thanks to the adoption of this new art from by Curtis Pierre and his Dixieland Steelband, the music became eligible for recognition by this twisted society. Not until the adoption by a person on the pan scene whom the society considered respectable did the society bring itself to discover talent in this art form.

The police too adopt this double standard. When the apparent offender against the law is black the police approach is rude enough. At times it is even violent. If, however, the apparent offender against the law is white the police approach if they do at all with trepidation and respect and, at times, even with apology. Bleach you skin white, go into a police station and see.

A society which functions as this one does is sick and in need of an effective cure. The J.N.A.C. has shown a commendable concern with the problem. The question which remains is: who will apply the cure? The cure, simple or difficult, must be applied simply because the black masses of this society feel that the society has been callous for too long and are demanding that it must be changed.

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